

Joseph S. Jemal Synagogue
Al & Sonny Gindi Building
83 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723

**Shabbat
Re'eh**

August 15, 2020
25AV 5780

Edmond J. Safra Synagogue
Mourad & Sarine Kattan Building
75 Hathaway Avenue, Deal, NJ 07723



Laser Vision

This week's perasha, begins with the word "Re'eh" Moshe Rabenu speaks to the Jewish people and says, "See (re'eh), I have set before you today a blessing and a curse" (Debarim 11:26).

The word "re'eh" seems out of place here. Moshe is not showing anything to the people; he is merely informing them about the consequences of their actions! Why does the Torah present this information in terms of "seeing," when it would have made more sense to use the idea of "hearing"?

Later in the perasha, the passuk instructs us "to do what is good and upright in the eyes of G-d" (Debarim 12:28). Rashi (quoting Sifri) divides this verse into two parts: the word "good" (tov) refers to doing good in the eyes of G-d, whereas the word "upright" (yashar) refers to acting righteously in the eyes of other people. This is a very puzzling comment. Since the verse itself links both of these qualities ("good" and "upright") to G-d, how can the Midrash say that the word "upright" refers to other people?

The students of Rabbi Yochanan ben

Zakkai came to visit him when he was on his deathbed. They gathered around their teacher and requested a blessing. Rabbi Yochanan replied, "May it be G-d's will that your fear of Heaven be as great as your fear of people." This unusual blessing surprised the students: "Is that all?" they exclaimed. It would seem that a person's fear of G-d should be even greater than his fear of people! Rabbi Yochanan responded: "You should know that when a person commits a crime, his first thought is always, 'Did anybody see me?'"

This mishna provides an insight into the Midrash's division of the passuk. "Do what is good and upright in the eyes of G-d." But how are we to know what is "good" in G-d's eyes? We do what is good in the eyes of G-d by imagining what our conduct would be if we were in the presence of important people. Acting righteously, with other people in mind, is a prerequisite to pleasing Hashem. This interpretation does not contradict the literal meaning of the passuk; rather, it teaches us an approach we must take in our daily lives to help ensure that

we are doing what is "good in G-d's eyes."

Now we can understand the use of the word "re'eh. The Talmud teaches, "Who is wise? One who sees the future" (Tamid 32a). It is interesting that the Talmud does not attribute wisdom to one who knows the future. Instead, the word "see" is used. This teaches us an important lesson. A person who knows what will happen may not change his behavior - but a person who vividly sees, in his mind, the potential outcome of his actions, may choose to act differently.

This is why Moshe uses the word "re'eh" in addressing the Jewish people. Moshe does not want the people simply to listen to his words - he wants them to vividly see the results of obeying or disobeying them. May we use our vision to truly see the ramifications of our action, speech and thought so that we can live our lives according to what is good and upright in G-d's eyes

Shabbat Shalom!
Rabbi Isaac Farhi

Joyous for Life

Joy is not the first word that naturally comes to mind when we think of the persecution of Judaism throughout history. Yet in truth what shines through so much of Tehilim is pure, radiant joy. And joy is one of the keywords of the book of Debarim. The root s-m-h (shin-mem-het appears once each in Beresheet, Shemot, Vayikra & Bamidbar, but twelve times in Debarim, seven of them in Perashat Re'eh.

What Moshe Rabenu says again and again is that joy is what we should feel in the land of Israel, the land given to us by G-d, the place to which the whole of Jewish life since the days of Abraham and Sarah has been a journey. The vast universe with its myriad galaxies and stars is G-d's work of art, but within it planet earth, and within that the land of Israel, and the sacred city of Jerusalem, is where he is closest, where his presence lingers in the air, where the sky is the blue of heaven and the stones are a golden throne. There, said Moshe, in "the place the Lord your G-d will choose ... to place his Name there for his dwelling" (Debarim 12: 5),

The biblical word for happiness, Ashrei, is the first word of the book of Tehilim and a key word of our daily prayers. But far more often, the Torah speaks about simcha, joy. Happiness is something you can feel alone, but joy, in Tanah, is something you share with others. For the first year of marriage, (Debarim 24:5) a husband must "stay at home and bring joy to the wife he has married." Bringing first-fruits to the Temple, "You and the Levite and the stranger living among you shall rejoice in all the good things the Lord your G-d has given to you and your household" (26:11). In one of the most extraordinary lines in the Torah, Moshe says that curses will befall the nation not because they served idols or abandoned G-d but "Because you did not serve your G-d with joy and gladness out of the abundance of all things" (28:47). A failure to rejoice is the first sign of decadence and decay.

Joy is the supreme religious emotion. Here we are, in a world filled with beauty. Every breath we breathe is the spirit of G-d within us. Around us is the love that moves the sun and all the stars. We are here because Hashem wanted us to be. The soul that celebrates, sings.

And yes, in life there is grief and disappointment, problems and pains, but beneath it all is the wonder that we are here, in a universe filled with beauty, among people each of whom carries within them a trace of the face of G-d.

Faith is born in a feeling of gratitude. Judaism is about taking life in both hands and making a blessing over it. It is as if G-d had said to us: I made all this for you. This is my gift. Enjoy it and help others to enjoy it also. Wherever you can, heal some of the pain that people inflict on one another. Because pain, sadness, fear, anger, envy, resentment, these are things that cloud your vision and separate you from others and from Me.

Every day we begin our morning prayers with a litany of thanks, that we are here, with a world to live in, family and friends to love and be loved by, about to start a day full of possibilities, in which, by acts of loving kindness, we allow G-d's presence to flow through us into the lives of others.



Giving is Receiving

This week's Perasha alludes to the Jewish idea of giving minimally 10% of one's net income to charity (Debarim 14:22). Twenty percent is the more ideal figure, but 10% is satisfactory.

Commenting on a word repetition in the Torah, the Sages make the following amazing statement: A person should give 10% in order to become wealthy! They say that it is impossible to become poor from giving charity, and if you don't believe it, just try it and see!

This is the only place that the Sages say you are allowed to test G-d out to see if He does what He says. Try giving 10% of your income to charity, they say, and watch your money grow. Apparently the concept is that if you use your money in a way that G-d wants, then He will give you more with which to do so.

The general principle of charity is as follows. What is more meaningful to do with your money - to spend it on yourself, or to use it to help others? What will give you deeper and more lasting pleasure? Giving to others is what will live with us for eternity - not the vast amount of things that we acquire in this world.

In Jewish thinking, G-d gives us money so we'll use it to make His world a better place. Yes, we should enjoy it also, and that's why one shouldn't give away more than 20%. But the true pleasure of money is the opportunity to use it to help others.

Even the best investment you can find will pay you nothing, once you have moved on from this world, as we all do one fine day. Only that which you invest in charitable giving can truly last forever.

On that note, please redeem all your pledges to the Synagogue before the upcoming holiday season begins. Thank you and tizku l'misvot!

Positive First

"The camel, the hare, and the hyrax, for they bring up their cud, but their hooves are not split" they are unclean to you; and the pig, for it has a split hoof, but not the cud" it is unclean to you" (Debarim 14:7-8)

The Torah's listing of kosher and non-kosher animals, which seems somewhat technical, contains many lessons beyond the mere details of what we may and may not eat.

Rabbi N. Weinberg of Aish HaTorah, who was directly responsible for bringing tens of thousands back to Judaism and an exponentially larger number through his students, would point out (based on a Gemara in Hulin 60b) that there is proof that an all-knowing G-d wrote the Torah from the verses listing the animals that chew their cud but do not have split hooves, and the animal that has split hooves and does not chew its cud. Would a human put his credibility on the line by predicting that at no point in the future would a single animal that is not on that list be found somewhere in the world?

And indeed, some three millennia after the Torah was given, and with all the searching science has done for unknown species, not a single such animal has been found! Aside from strengthening our faith, however, these verses also teach us a lesson in how to view, and relate to, other people.

The point of the verses listing the

animals that have only one kosher sign is to teach us that they are not kosher. It would seem appropriate, then, to list the sign that causes them to be non-kosher first. Yet we see that the Torah lists them as the camel, the rabbit, and the hyrax, which chew their cud but do not have split hooves, and the pig, which has split hooves, but does not chew its cud.

Why does the Torah list the kosher signs of these animals first if the non-existent signs are the only ones we really need in order to label these animals non-kosher?

A Midrash explains that the Torah is trying to teach us that even when something is not kosher, we should find a way to mention something praiseworthy about it first. Even something as non-kosher as a pig deserves to have its positive trait pointed out.

If the Torah does so for non-kosher animals, how much more do we have to learn to have this consideration with regard to people?

Bosses, employees, children, students, co-workers, and neighbors will invariably have some negative traits. It might be our job, from time to time, to deliver a negative message.

This Midrash is teaching us that even when we have to deliver a negative message to others" to tell them that they are "non-kosher" in some way" we should always find a way to point out their positive attributes or qualities first. (Rabbi Y. Frand)

WEEKDAY PRAYER & CLASS SCHEDULE

Weekday Shahrit:
6:15, 7:00, 8:00 & 9:00 am

Rabbi Nathan Escava
Early Morning Daf Yomi Class
Sun. & Fri. 6:15 till 7:00 am
& Mon. through Thurs.
5:15 till 6:15 am

*Please join us every morning
for a short class after each minyan*

Rabbi Isaac Farhi
Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday & Friday

Rabbi Yehuda Saban
Sunday, Monday & Friday

Rabbi Shlomo Haber
Sunday & Thursday

Weekday Mincha & Arbit
6:30 & 7:00 pm

Evening Classes:

Rabbi Isaac Farhi
Wed. evenings 8:00 pm
weekly Perasha – Zoom Class –
ALL ARE WELCOME!!

Rabbi Eliyahu Farhi
Wednesday 7:00 pm
Young Adult Class
Inside Out – Meaningful messages
from the Perasha

Rabbi Nathan Escava
Gemara
Sunday through Thursday
8:45 till 9:45 pm

This Week's Newsletter is generously sponsored in loving memory of
Sonny J. & Irene Gindi A"K
By their Children & Grandchildren

**Shabbat Re'eh Aug. 14 - 15, 2020 Prayer & Class Schedule****Friday night Shir Hashirim Minha & Kabbalat Shabbat**

6:15 pm Jemal
 6:30 pm Safra
 7:15 pm Jemal Building Main Sanctuary
 7:36 pm **Candle Lighting**

Shabbat Shahrit

6:15 am | 6:45 am | 8:00 am | 9:00 am

**Rabbi Leon Hazan & Rabbi Nathan Escava-
 Shabbat Morning Classes after 6:15 minyan**

**Rabbi Eliyahu Farhi (aprox 11:00 am)
 "You be the Judge" Cases in Monetary Laws**

Shabbat Minha Gedolah

2:00 pm Jemal Building

Classes:

6:15 pm Rabbi Nathan Escava – perasha class
 6:15 pm Rabbi Leon Hazan – practical Halacha
 6:15 pm Rabbi Isaac Farhi – Focusing on our Blessings
 6:15 pm Rabbi Victor Antebi

**7:10 pm Shabbat Minha - Safra & Jemal Buildings
 Main Sanctuaries**

**8:15 pm Seuda Shelisheet followed by Arbit
 8:36 pm Shabbat Ends**

Rosh Hodesh Elul will be celebrated on Thursday & Friday August 20 & 21

We are pleased to announce that plans are well underway for a meaningful and safe Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur at our synagogue. Thank G-d we have a three sanctuaries as well as an outdoor tent, therefore, we are able to hold a socially distant minyan at each location. All minyanim will be open to both men and women. Regretfully, no children under Bar Misva may attend services this year. All minyanim will adhere to the strictest guidelines of safety, without exception.

**Safra Synagogue Main Sanctuary – 8:00 am. Jemal Synagogue Main Sanctuary – 8:30 am
 Safra Synagogue Lower Level – 7:00 am Spacious Outdoor Tent - 8:30 am**

If you are a permanent seat holder or a synagogue member, you will have first priority. Please submit your form or call the synagogue office by Friday, August 21st, 2020 to reserve your seats in a particular minyan. We will do our best to accommodate your request. In order to properly plan, we respectfully ask that all men and women who will be attending synagogue on the High Holidays submit their requests as soon possible. You may email your form to safrashulnj@gmail.com or text 732-552-6030 (Seat request form is available on our website safrashulnj.org)

Thank you, The Seating Committee

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To sponsor a newsletter, Seuda, Kiddush or flowers in honor or in memory of a loved one, please contact the Synagogue office 732-552-6030 or safrashulnj@gmail.com